

PLANNING COMMISSION RECORD
Briefing Session

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, July 20, 2005, 11:00, Room 113,
First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street,
Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jon Carlson, Gene Carroll, Dick Esseks, Roger Larson, Melinda Pearson, Mary Bills-Strand and Lynn Sunderman; (Tommy Taylor absent). Marvin Krout, Kent Morgan, Steve Henrichsen, Duncan Ross, David Cary, Jean Walker and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Dept.; Roger Figard, Brian Kramer, Randy Hoskins, Steve Masters, Virendra Singh, Nick McElvain and Mike Brienzo of Public Works and Utilities; and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE Working session on the **Comprehensive Plan/Long Range Transportation Plan**

Steve Henrichsen began the meeting. He stated that the main purpose of this meeting is to decide on three future service limit scenarios to be used for purposes of study only. The first task has been completed, the assumptions. The second task is the development of future service limit scenarios. Staff will spend all of August reviewing those scenarios. The next step will be to reduce the three scenarios down to one service limit and from there, to a single land use plan.

This is not an examination of the Priority Areas, but the future service limit scenario for the year 2030.

Henrichsen stated that the past scenarios development was reviewed during the Comprehensive Plan Committee in May 2001. At that point, we were looking at Tier I and Tier II and exploring completely different ideas in terms of how the community might grow. We were looking at greenbelts, single direction of growth (east); multiple directions of growth; county development and scattering acreages with large area designated for prairie. Ideas were explored in terms of saline wetland preservation; a lot of growth in small towns; more directional growth to the southwest and focus all acreages and urban growth along transportation corridors. This was broken down into four additional futures, and then down to three in terms of analysis. This was meant to be a menu of ideas. At that point, a report was issued on August 29, 2001. Staff is proposing to release these new scenarios on August 31, 2005. The previous report included comments from various departments. We are

asking the departments in this case to give an idea of relative costs; the availability of providing parks, trails, library services, etc. For each of the three scenarios, staff will be doing some transportation modeling.

The information being referred to was provided to the Commissioners. It lists the assumptions that were adopted by the Planning commission on June 22. We now need to determine how much land we need for 2030 based on those assumptions.

Assumption: 1.5 % population growth.

Demand: In the past 5 years, building permits for approximately 10,000 dwelling units have been approved. Another factor in terms of figuring the projected future demand is in the year 2000, there were approximately 2.37 persons per dwelling unit, which is down from about 2.43 persons in the 1990 census. When looking at the year 2030, a projection of 2.32 persons per dwelling unit was used. This would mean 158,000 dwelling units inside the city in the year 2030, or a population of 350,000. This would work out to an additional 53,000 dwelling units between 1/01/2005 and 1/01/2030. That would be about an average of 2,100 dwelling units permitted each year, or constructed each year, during that period.

Larson questioned the 10,000 units in the last 5 years, what's the ratio of single family to multi-family? Henrichsen replied that in the single family detached, it probably runs a little over 70%. In the last 5 years, there has been an increase in the amount of single family attached or townhome units. The number of multi-family apartment units varies significantly each year.

Esseks inquired if there has been significant variation in the number of building permits per year over that 5 year period. Henrichsen replied in regards to multi-family, yes. Regarding single family, in 2003 one factor influencing that was the beginning of impact fees so there was a spike in the number of single family units in that year. Over a 20-year time period, even within single family, you'll see some dips and valleys although the overall trend was an increase in the single family units each year.

Esseks wondered if permits for 2000-2005 have been steady. Henrichsen believes there was a peak in 2003. There were fewer in 2004, and so far for this first six months, fewer units in terms of single family and multi-family in 2004. On the multi-family, it has been difficult to judge because of the 1st & Fletcher proposal. That may have influenced more dwelling units in terms of multi-family. Staff is trying to look at a 25 year period. Henrichsen offered to provide a chart of this information.

Henrichsen went on to explain the assumptions in terms of commercial square footage. The Planning Commission assumption was that commercial would increase approximately 2% annually. The commercial is more in the range of retail, office and service. This does not include manufacturing, trucking distribution and industrial uses. In terms of the supply side, when we look at what is already zoned commercial and which land is shown in the Comprehensive Plan, but not yet commercially zoned, there is capacity for 35 to 40 million square feet of additional commercial space. In terms of the demand side, our inventory as of 1/01/05, was about 38,000,000 square feet of occupied commercial space in the commercial areas. This is of an area slightly larger than the city limits. We have approximately as much occupied commercial square feet of space as we do in terms of supply. This is occupied space. There is about 4 million square feet of space that was either under construction or was built, but was vacant at the time of our inventory. As we are looking at this inventory, it primarily looks at commercial areas, but does include a little bit of industrial area, such as 14th & Old Cheney. Staff did include all of the I-3 employment center zonings in our survey, which could include some industrial land.

Larson questioned the big jump from 133 square feet per person to 176 square feet projected for 2030. Henrichsen replied that in looking over the longer period, it appears that we would probably continue the trend of larger establishments and increasing the amount of commercial space per person. We are seeing larger and larger grocery stores and discount centers. This is over a 25 year period. It also matched up with the assumption of 1.2 million square feet of commercial space on average, permitted each year.

Carlson believes we have to think about it beyond just the pure mathematics. At some point, super stores are more of a swap rather than an increase. Isn't there a factual limit to the size of the store and some commercial that will not be supersized? Henrichsen replied this was based more on the overall trend when combining all of the categories of commercial space.

Carlson likes the goal because commercial industry pays all the bills. He wants to understand how we are arriving at that number. Henrichsen replied that it also includes the employment centers. The net result is 38 million square feet of occupied space today. We are almost doubling that within the next 25 years. The goal is not to set the future service limit and step back and see what happens. We monitor the Comprehensive Plan every single year with updates every three to five to seven years.

Esseks proposed if the numbers are too generous, it encourages people to put their investment up front. Henrichsen responded if the numbers are too generous, the city might put out too much investment in water, sewer and other infrastructure. One of the important things to remember is after we establish the Future Service Limit, the priority map will be important as to which areas we are going to get infrastructure within the first half of that planning period.

Henrichsen continued that the assumption on industrial acres on June 22 kept the 2.5% increase projection from the previous Comprehensive Plan. Industrial employment had actually declined during the past five years.

In regard to the supply of industrial land, our inventory does not look at occupied square feet. It is just acres of use of industrial land. As of 1/01/05, there were approximately 2,700 acres of land occupied by industrial uses. When staff looked at supply, there are about 11,000 acres shown in the Comprehensive Plan or already zoned for industrial uses. Of that, about 5,700 acres is still undeveloped, of which over 3,500 acres were outside of the floodplain. About half of the 3,500 undeveloped acres are currently zoned for industrial use. Some land zoned industrial is also occupied by things such as railroad tracks, etc.

In terms of the demand as we have tracked land use changes, we have added about 200 acres of developed industrial land. Some of that comes from expansion within their own lot; some of it is brand new lots with new buildings; 40 acres per year. When you look at the ratio of industrial land per 1,000 in the county, we have about 11 acres of industrial land per 1,000 persons in the county. In this case, the trend was 9 acres per 1,000 in 1990. The 2030 projection assumes adding about 50 acres of industrial land this year and then 2.5% more every year after that. That would add about 1,700 acres of developed industrial land, about 68 acres per year over 25 years, and 11 acres per 1,000 persons to about 12 acres per 1,000 persons. Adding about 1,700 acres compared to the 2,700 acres we have today.

In terms of capacity of the Future Service Limit, when looking at the 2025 plan, generally there is enough capacity in the future service limit to meet projections out to the year 2030. We only look at new developing areas in the residential land inventory. That would assume that every acre we show for residential develops within that period, but experience has shown that not all of the land will be available for development for some reason or another. The overall is 7-8 square miles to be added to the Future Service Limit.

Esseks questioned if we can justify a 25% addition. Henrichsen believes in terms of coming up with three scenarios, two scenarios have the 25% factor built in, at least for purposes of comparison. What we would be proposing in one scenario would be just the 2025 future service limit. There are approximately 128 square miles inside of Scenario #1. Today, the city limits are about 82 square miles. Inside of these scenarios, we have tried to show the land that is today designated as vacant or agricultural uses in our land use maps. Wilderness Park and Pioneers Park are excluded from the mileage calculations. Both of these parks today are outside of the city limits. Neither is shown as being potentially available for development.

Scenario #2 would add approximately 128 plus 8 square miles, bringing it up to about 136 sq. miles. Scenario #2 spreads the growth areas in all directions. It is basically more of a multiple direction.

Scenario #3 shows all of the land is added to the east in one direction, about 8 square miles. The Planning Commission decision could ultimately be to combine parts from all three scenarios.

Pearson wondered where the future service limit line on Scenario #1 came from. Henrichsen replied it is the line that is in the Comprehensive Plan today. The 128 square miles reflects it as of July 1st of this year. The most recent annual review added land on N. 56th and I-80. That represents the 127.9 square miles.

Esseks inquired about the rationale to reemphasize the east area. Henrichsen replied that in previous discussions about multi-directional growth, the entire drainage basin of Stevens Creek of 52 square miles was considered. Looking at the I-80 area and an east beltway; you would be bringing in one trunk line, the water supply comes from the northeast. It is relatively easier to do to the east than in some of the other directions.

Pearson questioned when the Comprehensive Plan was approved by the City Council last time, and miles were added, were those exclusively on the east? Henrichsen replied yes, generally the area south of "O" Street down to about Pioneers Blvd.

Henrichsen stated Scenario #1 can accommodate all of the increases in inventory. Part of the idea is that when the year 2030 actually comes about, our Comprehensive Plan would be going out to the year 2050. Carlson noted that you also have to have flexibility built into the dynamic of the plan itself. This same process is going to happen again in 5 years.

Henrichsen stated Scenario #2 is one of the private proposals in the northwest area. Staff had included land along Hwy. 34 on both sides of the highway generally around NW 48th Street. Area A is south of Hwy 34, Area B is north and Area C comes up against Green Prairie Heights just slightly northwest of Arnold Heights. There are some limitations in terms of sewer capacity. There might be availability of water, and Hwy. 34 is going to four lanes in the next year. We did not include any land along the little Salt Creek because of the tiger beetle and saline wetlands. We did include the second private proposal that is to go over to N. 40th Street, north of the Interstate, to continue to expand the commercial and industrial areas. We did not include the landfill. We did not include the Waverly area or the Salt Creek Floodplain. We did include the next subdrainage basin within Salt Creek going out to the east beltway and Pioneers. We used the drainage basins and ridgelines as the boundaries. It would add some land south of the south beltway in the area around 40th Street, just east of the planned interchange. Out to the west, we split into the two areas, one along the Haines Branch and one along the Middle Creek. Water is a bit more of a challenge out in this area. Out along the west to Middle Creek, it would expand the employment center and some of the housing. There are not a lot of constraints in terms of wetlands, etc.

Each of the three scenarios included a circle in the Downtown/Antelope Valley area, just to represent additional development within the downtown area.

Scenario #3 includes areas in the northeast portion of Salt Creek. It is fairly arbitrary in terms of the boundary lines. There is an interchange with some potential additional development. We continue to have even more development in Scenario #2.

Scenario #2 and Scenario #3 include about 8 additional square miles. Table 2 shows additional information in terms of population and persons per square mile. There were about 3,000 persons per square mile in 1990. It went down by 30 people for the year 2000 and for the year 2030, it is projected to be down to about 2,700 persons per square mile. Scenario #2 and Scenario #3 would be about 2,600 persons per square mile in 2030.

Table 3 shows the amount of land that is available. Scenario #1 includes 41 square miles of land within the Future Service Limit. If you subtract out the floodplain and floodway and flood prone, there are about 32 square miles of land within Scenario #1 that would be available for development outside of the floodplain and floodway area.

Esseks will need to have some decision criteria, especially cost of service and which scenario is superior for generating jobs; investors who want to come into the community or expand. Henrichsen replied that at the end of August, staff will be able to give some ideas of which areas are generally more affordable or expensive. Some people may advocate for expansion of future service limit because some areas might be better served for employment areas.

Larson inquired if any annexation scenarios were available. Henrichsen replied that in general, by 2030 the areas shown will be in the service limits.

Pearson was surprised that in Scenario #2 there is not a lot of land along the Interstate, where in Scenario #3, there is. Henrichsen replied that a lot of potential is shown in both. They tried to add about 8 square miles in both scenarios. In terms of the specific area, the roads are mostly gravel, some land is residential. Water supply comes from Ashland to this area. Stevens Creek trunk line will serve the west half of the basin. There may be some down sides in terms of street capacity.

Bills-Strand noted that when they hear developer proposals, that will give the Commission a better idea.

Duncan Ross stated that he will be discussing two of the private proposals. The two proposals were for future service limit expansion. Looking at the first proposal, there is more to the proposal than the future service limit. There is an issue of land use and access. This proposal is in the northwest area, generally both sides of Hwy. 34, west of NW 48th St. Larry Coffey is proposing 1,500 acres, currently Tier 3. He is proposing 1,000 acres added to Tier 1, Priority A and the remainder Priority B and some as Tier 2. Staff has included as part of Scenario #2, parts of Northwest A and Northwest B. All of the area

in Tier 1 has not been included as Mr. Coffey is proposing. The northwest A, B and C areas are about 1,900 acres overall. About 225-250 acres are in the floodplain. Staff needs to do a lot more work to evaluate the proposal.

Bills-Strand believes typically around Hwy. 34 would be industrial and other uses. Ross replied that is part of the proposal; commercial, industrial and residential.

Ross stated that the second proposal is by Development Unlimited. It builds on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment that was currently done on I-80 and N. 56th St. They are proposing the remainder of the square miles be brought into Tier 1, Priority A. An employment center is shown.

Esseks questioned if the areas are equally serviced in terms of water and sewer. Ross replied that is what staff will find out. How they rank with the other areas needs to be more fully evaluated.

Henrichsen posed the question if the three scenarios presented today are the ones that Commissioners want staff to explore for purposes of study. Staff will be spending the next three weeks doing evaluations.

Esseks stated that it seems Scenario #3 looks attractive, providing there is the East Beltway. Henrichsen stated that the East Beltway is not currently in the Dept. of Roads plans. 2012 is the South Beltway, the East Beltway is longer term. The corridor for the East Beltway should be identified. Staff is forming a joint agency to try and preserve the beltway corridor but we don't have a time frame or financing. It is hard to know why the State liked the South Beltway. Some comments from the State have been that the East Beltway may not provide much of a function as far as getting around town. More of the emphasis has been on getting the South Beltway going.

Carroll believes everything has been covered in the scenarios.

Larson knows that most things will depend on cost. Henrichsen replied in 2001 when all costs were added up, there was not a lot of difference between the three scenarios.

Pearson stated that the initial Comprehensive Plan talks more about multi-directional growth. She has a tendency to think Scenario #2 does that. Eastward movement has already been integrated in her opinion. The additional Stevens Creek area added 8 square miles already.

Carlson asked about the southwest treatment plant. Henrichsen replied that Public Works is scheduling a meeting for Aug. 3, 2005 to talk about public meetings that will be held regarding the southwest treatment plant. Any development beyond Scenario #1 will require that facility. Commissioners will be getting some information in advance of the meeting.

Bills-Strand believes we need to stay open minded as we look at all of these proposals.

Henrichsen stated that these three scenarios will be sent to staff for evaluation purposes. Sept. 14, 2005 will be the next meeting to look at Comprehensive Plan/LRTP issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa McKinstry
Office Specialist
Planning Department

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